

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 06723 081440Z

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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R 081333Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5032

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT BAHGDAD

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 6723

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EG LY

SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN PRESS ON LIBYA

REF: A. CAIRO 6701 B. LD2910074 C. CAIRO 6680

1. ALL LOCAL PAPERS JULY PICK UP AND AMPLIFY AKHBAR STORY (JULY 4) THAT LIBYAN INTELLIGENCE IS FOMENTING SCHEMES TO ANNEX EGYPT'S WESTERN DESERT. RED BANNER HEADLINES ANNOUNCE THAT PLANS HAVE BEEN DRAWN UP TO OCCUPY SIWA OASIS. STORIES REPEAT THAT AGENTS ARE BEING TRAINED IN MILITARY CAMP NEAR TOBRUK TO ENGAGE IN ACTS OF SABOTAGE, ASSASSINATION AND CURRENCY SMUGGLING OPERATIONS.

2. ONLY NEW ELEMENT IN STORIES IS REPORT THAT 30 PERSON (DESCRIBED AS MOSTLY BEDOUIN WHO ARE CONVICTED MURDERERS AND THIEVES) HAVE BEEN ARRESTED, INCLUDING HEAD OF "ORGANIZATION". LE 30,000 HAS BEEN SEIZED FROM THEM AND THEY HAVE ALLEGEDLY CONFESSED THAT 30 MILLION DINARS, PREVIOUSLY EARMARKED FOR BUDGET AID TO EGYPT, HAS NOW BEEN DIVERTED BY QADHAAFI TO PAY FOR HIS SCHEMES AGAINST EGYPT. STORIES ADD THAT GOE SECURITY FIRST LEARNED OF THIS ORGANIZATION IN NOVEMBER 1974 IN CONNECTION WITH REPORTS OF PLOT TO BLOW UP SADAT'S MERSA
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PAGE 02 CAIRO 06723 081440Z

MATRUH RESTHOUSE.

3. AKHBAR ADDS THAT AMONG HIGH-RANKING EGYPTIAN OFFICIALS TARGETED FOR ASSASSINATION WERE ALI AND MUSTAFA AMIN, AKHBAR'S BOARD CHAIRMAN AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF. (AHAM AND GUMHURRIYA AVOID ACCORDING COMPETITORS ANY GRATUITOUS PUBLICITY AND REPORT ONLY THAT LIST EXISTS).

4. PRESS REPORTS ON EXISTENCE OF LIBYAN FINANCED ORGANIZATION DOVETAIL SOMEWHAT WITH REFERENCED FBIS ITEM QUOTING ITALIAN NEWS-PAPER STORY. REPORT ALLEGES THAT ORGANIZATION (CALLED "MOVEMENT FOR PROTECTION OF THE JULY 23 REVOLUTION") IS OPERATING INSIDE EGYPT AGAINST SADAT REGIME AND HAS CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR SHOTS TAKEN RECENTLY AT SADAT'S BROTHER-IN-LAW (SIC). STORY ADDS THAT AHAM HAS REPORTED ARRESTS OF "NUMEROUS PERSONS BELONGING TO SECRET ORGANIZATIONS" AND CONFISCATION OF "LARGE QUANTITIES OF ARMS" AND INTIMATES THAT THIS WAS RESULT OF SPATE OF CIAOR FIRES IN JUNE.

5. COMMENT: SADAT HAS NO BROTHER-IN-LAW. WE UNDERSTAND FROM BRITISH EMBOFFS THAT REPORT MAY BE REHASH OF RECENT STORY IN BEIRUT'S AL-KIFAH AL-ARABI THAT SADAT'S SON-IN-LAW, MAR'I, HAD BEEN SHOT AT AS WARNING TO HIS "CLASS" THAT PEOPLE WOULD NO LONGER TOLERATE EXPLOITATION OF PEOPLE - IDENTICAL CIRCUMSTANCES REPORTED IN ITALIAN STORY ON BROTHER-IN-LAW. TO BEST OUR KNOWLEDGE AND THAT OF OTHER OBSERVERS NO SUCH INCIDENT HAS TAKEN PLACE. REMAINDER OF ITALIAN REPORT IS INACCURATE. AHAM AND OTHER LOCAL PAPERS HAVE CARRIED ACCOUNTS OF ARRESTS OF A FEW LIBYANS OVER PAST SEVERAL MONTHS WHO HAD ATTEMPTED PURCHASE ONE OR TWO PISTOLS. FIRST PRESS REPORT IN AT LEAST PAST THREE MONTHS THAT "SECRET ORGANIZATION" HAD BEEN UNCOVERED WAS JULY 5 (REF C); ITALIAN STORY DATED JUNE 29. LOCAL PRESS HAS REPORTED NO RPT NO CONFISCATION OF LARGE ARMS CACHE, BUT HAS ALLEGED WIDELY THAT LIBYAN SABOTEURS WERE BEHIND CAIRO FIRES. PRESS REPORTS JULY 7 THAT OFFICIAL GOE INVESTIGATIONS INTO FIRES HAVE DETERMINED THAT SOLE CAUSES OF FIRES WERE NEGLIGENCE AND INADEQUATE FIREFIGHTING EQUIPMENT.
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